

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Greece

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SUBJECT Formation of KKE Regional Council for
Government-held Macedonia
25X1A6aPLACE
ACQUIRED [REDACTED]

DATE OF INFO. February 1949

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1. It is reported that on or about 8 February 1949, Tassos Petrides (member of the Politburo of KKE and leader of the KKE Reserve Front in Salonika), was informed by the Politburo that Party organization in Government-held Macedonia was to be altered immediately. A Regional Council for Government-held Macedonia with Petrides as its head was now to be formed with headquarters in Salonika.*

2. The Regional Council would consist of:

Tassos Petrides	: First Secretary
Anastasios Tsikares	: Second Secretary and instructor
Orestes Stephanides	: Representing Salonika
Colonel Georgios Erythriades	: Representing Regional combatant organizations
Katy Tassopoulou	: Representing women's organizations
Symeonides (fnu)	: Representing the EAM Panhellenic Youth Organization - Eamike Panhellenike Organosis Neolaias - EPON)

Erythriades and Tsakires were not present in Salonika, but their arrival was expected in the near future.

3. A Salonika Town Instructional Committee would also be set up, consisting of:

Orestes Stephanides	: First Secretary
Alexandros Vougias	: Second Secretary
Maria Demetriadou	: Women's organization
Kouvelas (fnu)	: EPON
Vougloukas (fnu)	: Finance

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4. Petrides had received a letter from Demetrios Vlandas (member of the Politburo) written after the Fifth Plenum of the Central Committee had taken place, to the effect that
- a. From the time of Varkiza (February 1945) until recent months, KKE had paid far too little attention to party instruction and the strict application of Marxist-Leninist doctrine. This had inevitably resulted in reactionary deviation and defeatism, particularly in the Rebel Army, of which less than twenty percent of the troops were estimated to be Party members, and where strict Party discipline was therefore all the more essential.
 - b. The growth of defeatism in the Rebel Army could be gathered from the following figures:
 - 1946: total strength about 8,000. Surrenders amounting to about fifteen percent.
 - 1947: total strength rose to approximately 15,000 through mass recruiting, in spite of losses and surrenders. Surrenders, however, rose to about twenty percent.
 - 1948: strength rose to over 25,000 and surrenders to about twenty-five percent of effectives.
 - c. To combat this growing defeatism, the Party had decided in the autumn of 1948 to place trained Communist instructors in all Rebel Army units. Results were considered satisfactory in that the increasing tendency towards defeatism had been halted.
 - d. On the question of policy, Vlandas noted that in June 1948, before the Grammos battle began, the Cominform had recommended that the Party should continue the struggle only if it were satisfied with, and able to meet, the following conditions:
 - 1) that the Rebel Army would receive no support from the Soviet Union and the "popular democracies" beyond the dispatch of supplies and moral encouragement, there being no possibility that armed assistance would be given.
 - 2) if the fighting was to continue, it was essential that the Rebel Army be converted into a well organized "popular revolutionary army" with a sound basis in Marxist-Leninist doctrine.
 - 3) that mass uprisings in the towns was an indispensable corollary to the struggle, since without this it lacked a proper proletarian character.
 - 4) that the basis of the struggle must rest on the thorough "enlightenment" of Party members and not on mass appeal, which would result only in defeatism or deviation.
 - e. If these conditions were felt to be impracticable, the Cominform had recommended that KKE should endeavor to come to terms with the Athens Government and resume its place as a lawful political party.
 - f. The Politburo had examined the situation carefully in the light of the above conditions and had come to the conclusion that they should continue fighting, at the same time doing their utmost to implement the recommendations of the Cominform. The subsequent successes of the Rebel Army on Vitsi, at Karditsa, Naoussa and Karpenision had provided

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justification of their decision, and the morale of the Greek National Army and people had fallen appreciably during this period. The peace-feelers put out over the Rebel radio had been successful propaganda and had contributed to the lowering of the enemy's morale.

- g. Vlandas concluded by forecasting Greek National Army offensives in the spring in Central Greece, on Vitsi and on Grammos. He said that these offensives would be broken against mountain fortifications now being prepared, and that the Rebel Army, with increased fire power, and with air support, would then sweep forward in a counter-attack with every chance of success.
5. By 14 February 1949, Tassos Petrides had laid down the following division of responsibilities within the Regional Council:
- a. All political matters, including "instruction" and the supervision of the "cleansing" of Party committees in the towns, would be handled by a committee consisting of:

Tassos Petrides
Orestes Stephanides
Katy Tassoupoulou
Anastassios Tsikares
Symeonides (fnu)
 - b. An independent recruiting committee would be formed, which in conjunction with Party committees in the towns, would organize recruiting both for the combatant organizations in the towns and for dispatch to the Rebel Army. This committee would consist of:

Colonel Georgios Erythriades, representing regional combatant organizations.

Symeonides (fnu), representing EPCN

Katy Tassoupoulou, representing women's organizations.
 - c. Lieutenant Colonel Kyros Tsakires, who would represent Salonika combatant organizations on the new Regional Council, had been briefed at the general headquarters of the Rebel Army to organize a new series of sabotage operations in Salonika. He had just visited Salonika and was on his way to the Khortiatas "yiafka" to take over from Lieutenant Colonel Demetrios Mandelas. His preparations would be made in consultation with headquarters of 6 Army Division, whose area included Salonika. It was the responsibility of the Regional Council to offer every moral and material help to groups of saboteurs who entered the town. This assistance would be coordinated by Erythriades in consultation with a three member committee to be appointed by the Regional Council.

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* ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment: By the middle of February, this organization only existed on paper, although strenuous efforts were being made to bring it into being.

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